Xbox Ambassadors 2021 End of the Year Lists: Best New Soundtracks

Community NerdyBirdy Dec 7, 2021

As we approach the end of the year, it’s a great time to highlight and celebrate some of the best new releases that we’ve seen this year for Xbox and PC. From eagerly anticipated new AAA titles, to undiscovered new indie darlings, we’re showcasing the best of Xbox over 2021.

For this week, we’re focusing on the best music and soundtracks to come out in 2021. Music is central to the gaming experience. Ask any avid gamer about their favorite soundtracks and you’re likely to get a stream of immediate recommendations. There’s good reason for that.

Music is closely tied to our emotional experiences and can help tie the different elements of a game together. A great soundtrack helps to set the tone and atmosphere of a game, as well as builds its narrative vision.

We’ve outlined some of the top video game soundtracks to be released in 2021.

- **The Artful Escape:** It’s fitting that a game originally conceived and developed by a professional musician would be named one of the year’s best soundtracks. Johnny Galvatron used music to underpin every aspect of The Artful Escape’s gameplay. From the storyline to the game’s mechanics, The Artful Escape contains one of the most unique musical interpretations in all of gaming.
- **Forza Horizon 5:** Driving and music go hand in hand so it’s not surprising that Forza Horizon 5 has some of the year’s best music. Built

like an actual road trip, Forza Horizon 5 contains several distinct playlists from which the player can choose to listen to hits from popular artists such as Dua Lipa, the Beastie Boys, Lil’ Nas X, and the Foo Fighters.

Image: Playground Games

- **Life is Strange: True Colors:** The Life is Strange series of games have always built engaging and accessible playlists into their gameplay. With a storyline revolving around teenage life, Life is Strange: True Colors made sure to sample heavily from today’s top indie artists. Phobe Bridgers, Gabrielle Aplin, Portugal The Man and Hayley Kiyoko are just a few of the names featured within the game. Life is Strange: True Colors was critically acclaimed for its soundtrack, and even won Best Original Soundtrack at the 2021 ARIA Music Awards.

Image: Square Enix

- **Ori: The Collection:** When Ori: The Collection was released this year, players knew they were not only getting Ori’s exhilarating visuals and addicting gameplay, but they were also going to receive some of gaming’s most emotionally resonant music. Composer Gareth Coker used music to introduce the player to new situations and characters and was widely praised for Ori’s incredible soundtrack.

- **Sable:** It’s not often that a video game’s release is partnered with a vinyl production of the game’s soundtrack, but that’s what happens when you get the Grammy nominated band Japanese Breakfast to compose your game’s music. Michelle Zauner, herself a gaming enthusiast, layered Sable with rich tracks including “Better the Mask”, which she’s said is her favorite song that she’s ever written as an artist.
- **Yakuza 6: The Song of Life:** One of gaming’s most popular action game series, the Yakuza series of games has always been composed by Hidenori Shoji. Shoji brings a wealth of game composing experience, with his first soundtrack coming in 1996. Since then, he’s helped bring widely lauded music to each of the Yakuza games.

What were some of your favorite new soundtracks that were released this year? Let us know in the comments below!